

Miss Pritchard as Harriet.



'Tis most sincerely and literally true.

Act I.

Terry, sculp.

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THE
GUARDIAN.

A
COMEDY.

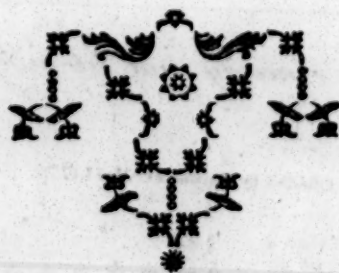
As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-SROYAL

IN

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.



L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXIX.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Mr. HEARTLY, the Guardian.

Mr. CLACKIT, his Nephew.

Sir CHARLES CLACKIT.

SERVANT.

W O M E N.

Miss HARRIET, an Heiress,

Luey, the Maid.



THE GUARDIAN.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Hall in Mr. Heartly's House.

Enter Sir Charles Clackit, his Nephew, and Servant.

Serv. PLEASE to walk this way, Sir.

Sir Char. Where is your master, friend?

Serv. In his dressing-room, Sir.

Y. Clackit. Let him know then——

Sir Char. Pr'ythee be quiet, Jack; when I am in company let me direct. 'Tis proper and decent.

Y. Clackit. I am dumb, Sir.

Sir Char. Tell Mr. Heartly, his friend and neighbour, Sir Charles Clackit, would say three words to him.

Serv. I shall, Sir——

[Exit.]

Sir Char. Now nephew, consider once again, before I open the matter to my neighbour Heartly, what I am going to undertake for you.—Why don't you speak?

Y. Clackit. Is it proper and decent, uncle?

Sir Char. Pshaw! don't be a fool—but answer me—don't you flatter yourself.—What assurance have you that this young lady, my friend's ward, has a liking to you? the young fellows of this age are all coxcombs, and, I am afraid, you are no exception to the general rule.

Y. Clackit. Thank you uncle—but may I this instant be struck old and peevish, if I would put you upon a false scent to expose you for all the fine women in christendom.—I assure you again and again, and you may take my word, uncle, that Miss Harriet has no kind of aversion to your nephew and most humble servant.

Sir Char. Ay, ay,——vanity!——vanity!——but I never take a young fellow's word about women; they'll lye as fast, and with as little conscience, as the Brussels Gazette.—Produce your proofs.

Y. Clackit. Can't your eyes see 'em, uncle, without urging me to the indelicacy of repeating 'em.

Sir Char. Why I see nothing but a fool's head and a fool's coat, supported by a pair of most unpromising legs.—Have you no better proofs?

Y. Clackit. Yes, I have, my good infidel uncle, half a hundred.

Sir Char. Out with them then.

Y. Clackit. First then—whenever I see her, she never looks at me.—That's a sign of love.—Whenever I speak to her, she never answers me.—another sign of love.—And whenever I speak to any body else, she seems to be perfectly easy.—That's a certain sign of love.

Sir Char. The devil it is!

Y. Clackit. When I am with her, she's always grave; and the moment I get up to leave her, then the poor thing begins—"Why will you leave me, Mr. Clackit; can't you sacrifice a few moments to

my bashfulness—stay, you agreeable runaway, stay, I shall soon overcome the fears your presence gives me."—I cou'd say more—But a man of honour, uncle——

Sir Char. What, and has she said all these things to you?

Y. Clackit. O yes, and ten times more—with her eyes.

Sir Char. With her eyes!—Eyes are very equivocal, Jack.—However, if the young lady has any liking to you, Mr. Heartly is too much a man of the world, and too much my friend, to oppose the match; so do you walk into the garden, and I will open the matter to him.

Y. Clackit. Is there any objection to my staying, uncle? The business will be soon ended.—You will propose the match, he will give his consent, I shall give mine, Miss is sent for, and *l'affair est fait*.

[Snapping his finger.]

Sir Char. And so you think that a young beautiful heiress, with forty thousand pounds, is to be had with a scrap of French, and a snap of your finger.—Pr'ythee get away, and don't provoke me.

Y. Clackit. Nay, but my dear uncle——

Sir Char. Nay, but my impertinent Nephew, either retire, or I'll throw up the game.

[Putting him out.]

Y. Clackit. Well, well, I am gone, uncle—When you come to the point, I shall be ready to make my appearance.—*Bon voyage!*

[Exit.]

Sir Char. The devil's in these young fellows, I think.—We send 'em abroad to cure their sheepishness, and they get above proof the other way.—

Enter Mr. Heartly.

—Good-morrow to you, neighbour.

Heart. And to you, Sir Charles, I am glad to see you so strong and healthy.

Sir Char. I can return you the compliment, my friend—without flattery, you don't look more than thirty-five; and, between ourselves, you are on the wrong side of forty—but mum for that.

Heart. Ease and tranquility keep me as you see.

Sir Char. Why don't you marry neighbour? A good wife would do well for you.

Heart. For me? you are pleased to be merry Sir Charles.

Sir Char. No, faith, I am serious, and had I a daughter to recommend to you, you should say me nay more than once, I assure you, neighbour Heartly, before I would quit you.

Heart. I am much obliged to you.

Sir Char. But indeed, you are a little too much of the philosopher, to think of being troubled with women and their concerns.

Heart. I beg your pardon, Sir Charles—Tho' there are many, who call themselves philosophers, yet that live single, and perhaps are in the right of it, I cannot think that marriage is at all inconsistent.

with true philosophy.—A wise man will resolve to live like the rest of the world, with this only difference, that he is neither a slave to passions nor events.—It is not because I have a little philosophy, but because I am on the wrong side of forty, Sir Charles, that I desire to be excused [*Smiling*].

Sir Char. As you please, Sir,—and now to my business.—You have no objection, I suppose, to tie up your ward, Miss Harriet, though you have slipped the collar yourself—ha! ha! ha!

Heart. Quite the contrary, Sir; I have taken her some time from the boarding-school, and brought her home, in order to dispose of her worthily, with her own inclination.

Sir Char. Her father, I have heard you say, recommended that particular care to you, when she had reached a certain age.

Heart. He did so—and I am the more desirous to obey him scrupulously in this circumstance, as she will be a most valuable acquisition to the person who shall gain her—for, not to mention her fortune, which is the least consideration, her sentiments are worthy her birth; she is gentle, modest, and obliging.—In a word, my friend, I never saw youth more amiable or discreet—but perhaps I am a little partial to her.

Sir Char. No, no, she is a delicious creature, every body says so.—But I believe, neighbour, something has happened that you little think of.

Heart. What, pray, Sir Charles?

Sir Char. My nephew, Mr. Heartly—

Enter Young Clackit.

Y. Clackit. Here I am, at your service.—My uncle is a little unhappy in his manner; but I'll clear the matter in a moment—Miss Harriet, Sir—your ward—

Sir Char. Get away, you puppy!

Y. Clackit. Miss Harriet, Sir, your ward—a most accomplish'd young lady, to be sure—

Sir Char. Thou art a most accomplish'd coxcomb, to be sure.

Heart. Pray, Sir Charles, let the young gentleman speak.

Y. Clackit. You'll excuse me, Mr. Heartly—my uncle does not set up for an orator—a little confused, or so, Sir—you see me what I am—but I ought to ask pardon for the young lady and myself.—We are young, Sir—I must confess we were wrong to conceal it from you—but my uncle, I see, is pleased to be angry, and therefore I shall say no more at present.

Sir Char. If you don't leave the room this moment, and stay in the garden, till I call you—

Y. Clackit. I am sorry I have displeased you—I did not think it was *mal-a-propos*; but you must have your way uncle—you command—I submit—Mr. Heartly, yours. [*Exit. Young Clackit.*]

Sir Char. Puppy! [*Aside.*] My nephew's a little unthinking, Mr. Heartly, as you see, and therefore I have been a little cautious how I have proceeded in this affair: but indeed, he has persuaded me in a manner, that your ward and he are not ill together.

Heart. Indeed! this is the first notice I have had of it, and I cannot conceive why Miss Harriet should conceal it from me; for I have often assured her, that I would never oppose her inclination, though I might endeavour to direct it.

Sir Char. 'Tis human nature, neighbour—we are so ashamed of our first passion, that we would willingly hide it from ourselves—but will you mention my nephew to her?

Heart. I must beg your pardon, Sir Charles—

the name of the gentleman whom she chooses, must first come from herself—my advice or importunity shall never influence her: if guardians would be less rigorous, young people would be more reasonable; and I am so unfashionable to think, that happiness in marriage can't be bought too dear.—I am still on the wrong side of forty, Sir Charles.

Sir Char. No, no—you are right, neighbour—but here she is—don't alarm her young heart too much, I beg of you—upon my word, she is a sweet morsel.

Enter Miss Harriet and Lucy.

Miss Har. He is with company—I'll speak to him another time. [*Retiring.*]

Lucy. Young, handsome, and afraid of being seen.—You are very particular, Miss.

Heart. Miss Harriet, you must not go.—[*Harriet returns.*] Sir Charles, give me leave to introduce you to this young lady.—[*Introduces her.*] you know, I suppose, the reason of this gentleman's visit to me? [*To Harriet.*]

Miss Har. Sir! [*Confused.*]

Heart. You may trust me, my dear; [*Smiling.*]—don't be disturb'd, I shall not reproach you with any thing but keeping your wishes a secret from me so long.

Miss Har.—Upon my word, Sir.—Lucy!

Lucy. Well, and Lucy! I'll lay my life 'tis a treaty of marriage.—Is that such a dreadful thing? oh, for shame, Madam! young ladies of fashion are not frightened at such things now a days.

Heart. to Sir Char. We have gone too far, Sir Charles—we must excuse her delicacy, and give her time to recover, I had better talk with her alone; we will leave her now—be persuaded that no endeavours shall be wanting on my part, to bring this affair to a happy and a speedy conclusion.

Sir Char. I shall be obliged to you, Mr. Heartly.—Young lady, your servant.—What grace and modesty! she is a most engaging creature, and I shall be proud to make her one of my family.

Heart. You do us honour, Sir Charles.

[*Exeunt Sir Charles and Heartly.*]

Lucy. Indeed, Miss Harriet, you are very particular; you are tired of the boarding-school, and yet seem to have no inclination to be married.—What can be the meaning of all this?—that smirking old gentleman is uncle to Mr. Clackit; and, my life for it, he has made some proposals to your guardian.

Miss Har. Pr'ythee don't plague me about Mr. Clackit!

Lucy. But why not, Miss? tho' he is a little fantastical, loves to hear himself talk, and is somewhat self-sufficient; you must consider he is young, has been abroad, and keeps good company—the trade will soon be at an end, if young ladies and gentlemen grow over-nice and suspicious.

Miss Har. But if I can find one without these faults, I may surely please myself.

Lucy. Without these faults! and is he young, Miss?

Miss Har. He is sensible, modest, polite, affable, and generous; and charms from the natural impulses of his own heart, as much as others are beguiled by their senseless airs, and insolent affectations.

Lucy. Upon my word!—But why have you kept this secret so long?—Your guardian is kind to you beyond conception.—What difficulties can you have to overcome?

Miss Har. Why the difficulty of declaring my sentiments.

Lucy. Leave that to me, Miss.—But your spark, with all his accomplishments, must have very little penetration not to have discovered his good fortune in your eyes.

Miss Har. I take care that my eyes don't tell too much; and he has too much delicacy to interpret looks to his advantage. Besides, he would certainly disapprove my passion; and if I should ever make the declaration, and meet with a denial, I should absolutely die with shame.

Lucy. I'll ensure your life for a silver thimble.—But what can possibly hinder your coming together?

Miss Har. His excess of merit.

Lucy. His excess of a fiddlestick!—But come, I'll put you in the way!—you shall trust me with the secret;—I'll entrust it again to half a dozen friends, they shall entrust it to half a dozen more, by which means it will travel half the town over in a week's time; the gentleman will certainly hear of it, and then if he is not at your feet in the fetching of a sigh, I'll give up all my perquisites at your wedding.—What is his name, Miss?

Miss Har. I cannot tell you his name—indeed I cannot; I am afraid of being thought too singular.—But why should I be ashamed of my passion? Is the impression which a virtuous character makes upon our hearts such a weakness that it may not be excused?

Lucy. By my faith, Miss, I can't understand you: you are afraid of being thought singular, and you really are so:—I would sooner renounce all the passions in the universe than have one in my bosom beating and fluttering itself to pieces.—Come, come, Miss, open the window, and let the poor devil out.

Enter Heartly.

Heart. Leave us, Lucy.

Lucy. There's something going forward—'tis very hard I can't be of the party. *[Exit.*

Heart. She certainly thinks, from the character of the young man, that I shall disapprove of her choice. *[Aside.*

Miss Har. What can I possibly say to him? I am as much ashamed to make the declaration, as he would be to understand it.

Heart. Don't imagine, my dear, that I would know more of your thoughts than you desire I should; but the tender care which I have ever shewn, and the sincere friendship which I shall always have for you, give me a sort of right to enquire into every thing that concerns you.—Some friends have spoken to me in particular—but that is not all—I have lately found you thoughtful, absent, and disturbed;—be plain with me—has not somebody been happy enough to please you?

Miss Har. I cannot deny, Sir—yes,—somebody indeed has pleased me;—but I must intreat you not to give credit to any idle stories, or enquire farther into the particulars of my inclination; for I cannot possibly have resolution enough to say more to you.

Heart. But have you made a choice, my dear?

Miss Har. I have, in my own mind, Sir; and 'tis impossible to make a better;—reason, honour, every thing must approve it.

Heart. And how long have you conceived this passion?

Miss Har. Ever since I left the country—to live with you. *[Sighs.*

Heart. I see your confusion, my dear, and will

relieve you from it immediately.—I am informed of the whole—

Miss Har. Sir!

Heart. Don't be uneasy, for I can with pleasure assure you, that your passion is returned with equal tenderness.

Miss Har. If you are not deceived—I cannot be more happy.

Heart. I think I am not deceived;—but, after the declaration you have made, and the assurances which I have given you, why will you conceal it any longer? Have I not deserved a little more confidence from you?

Miss Har. You have indeed deserved it, and should certainly have it, were I not well assured that you would oppose my inclinations.

Heart. I oppose 'em! Am I then so unkind to you, my dear?—Can you in the least doubt of my affection for you?—I promise you that I have no will but yours.

Miss Har. Since you desire it then, I will endeavour to explain myself.

Heart. I am all attention;—speak, my dear.

Miss Har. And if I do, I feel I shall never be able to speak to you again.

Heart. How can that be, when I shall agree with you in every thing?

Miss Har. Indeed you won't:—pray let me retire to my own chamber—I am not well, Sir.

Heart. I see your delicacy is hurt, my dear: but let me intreat you once more to confide in me.—Tell me his name, and the next moment I will go to him, and assure him, that my consent shall confirm both your happiness.

Miss Har. You will easily find him—and when you have, pray tell him how improper it is for a young woman to speak first.—persuade him to spare my blushes, and to release me from so terrible a situation—I shall leave him with you—and hope that this declaration will make it impossible for you to mistake me any longer.

[Harriet is going, but upon seeing Y. Clackit, remains upon the stage.]

Heart. Are we not alone? What can this mean? *[Aside.*

Y. Clackit. Apropos, faith! Here they are together.

Heart. I did not see him;—but now the riddle's explained. *[Aside.*

Miss Har. What can he want now?—This is the most spiteful interruption. *[Aside.*

Y. Clackit. By your leave, Mr. Heartly—

[Crosses him to go to Harriet.]

—Have I caught you at last, my divine Harriet!—Well, Mr. Heartly, *sans façon*—But what's the matter, ho!—Things look a little gloomy here;—one mutters to himself, and gives me no answer, and the other turns the head, and winks at me.—How the devil am I to interpret all this?

Miss Har. I wink at you, Sir! Did I, Sir?

Y. Clackit. Yes, you, my angel;—but mum.—

Mr. Heartly. for Heaven's sake, what is all this? Speak, I conjure you, is it life or death with me?

Miss Har. What a dreadful situation I am in!

Y. Clackit. Hope for the best—I'll bring matters about, I warrant you.

Heart. You have both of you great reason to be satisfied.—Nothing shall oppose your happiness.

Y. Clackit. Bravo, Mr. Heartly!

Heart. Miss Harriet's will is a law to me; and for you, Sir—the friendship which I have ever professed for your uncle is too sincere not to exert some of it upon this occasion.

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Miss Har. I shall die with confusion! [*Afide.*]

Y. Clackit. I am alive again.—Dear Mr. Heartly, thou art a most adorable creature! What a happiness it is to have to do with a man of sense, who has no foolish prejudices, and can see when a young fellow has something tolerable about him!—

Heart. Sir, not to flatter you, I must declare, that it is from a knowledge of your friends and family, that I have hopes of seeing you and this young lady happy. I will go directly to your uncle, and assure him that every thing goes on to our wishes.

[*Going.*]

Miss Har. Mr. Heartly—pray, Sir!

Heart. Poor Miss Harriet, I see your distress, and am sorry for it; but it must be got over, and the sooner the better.—Mr. Clackit, my dear, will be glad of an opportunity to entertain you, for the little time that I shall be absent!—Poor Miss Harriet! [*Smiling.*]

[*Exit. Heartly.*]

Y. Clackit. *Allez, allez, monsieur!*—I'll answer for that—well, Ma'am, I think every thing succeeds to our wishes;—be sincere, my adorable—don't you think yourself a very happy young lady?

Miss Har. I shall be most particularly obliged to you, Sir, if you would inform me what is the meaning of all this.

Y. Clackit. Inform you, Miss!—the matter, I believe, is pretty clear—our friends have understood—we have affections—and a marriage follows of course.

Miss Har. Marriage, Sir. Pray what relation or particular connexion is there between you and me, Sir?

Y. Clackit. I may be deceiv'd faith—but upon my honour, I always supposed that there was a little smatt'ring of inclination between us.

Miss Har. And have you spoke to my guardian upon this supposition, Sir?

Y. Clackit. And are you angry at it? I believe not.—[*Smiling.*] Come, come, I believe not—'tis delicate in you to be upon the reserve.

Miss Har. Indeed, Sir, this behaviour of yours is most extraordinary.

Y. Clackit. Come, come, my dear, don't carry this jest too far, *e troppo, e troppo, mia carissima.*—What the devil, when every thing is agreed upon, and uncles and guardians, and such folks have given their consent, why continue the hypocrisy?

Miss Har. They may have consented for you; but I am mistress of my affections, and will never dispose of 'em by proxy.

Y. Clackit. Upon my soul this is very droll—what! has not your guardian been here this moment, and expressed all imaginable pleasure at our intended union?

Miss Har. He is in an error, Sir—and had I not been too much astonished at your behaviour, I had undeceiv'd him long before now.

Y. Clackit. [*Humming a tune.*] But, pray, Miss, to return to business—what can be your intention in raising all this confusion in the family, and opposing your own inclinations?

Miss Har. Opposing my own inclinations, Sir?

Y. Clackit. Ay, opposing your own inclinations, Madam—do you know, child, if you carry on this farce any longer, I shall begin to be a little angry?

Miss Har. I would wish it, Sir—for be assur'd, that I never in my life had the least thought about you.

Y. Clackit. Words, words, words—

Miss Har. 'Tis most sincerely and literally true.

Y. Clackit. Come, come, I know what I know—

Miss Har. Don't make yourself ridiculous, Mr. Clackit.

Y. Clackit. Don't you make yourself miserable, Miss Harriet.

Miss Har. I am only so, when you persist to torment me.

Y. Clackit. [*Smiling.*] And you really believe, that you don't love me?

Miss Har. Positively not.

Y. Clackit. [*Conceitedly.*] And you are very sure now, that you hate me?

Miss Har. Oh! most cordially.

Y. Clackit. Poor young lady! I do pity you from my soul.

Miss Har. Then why won't you leave me?

Y. Clackit. —“She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i'th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.”—

Take warning, Miss, when you once begin to pine in thought, 'tis all over with you; and be assured, since you are obstinately bent to give yourself airs, that if you once suffer me to leave this house in a pet—do you mind me!—not all your sighing, whining, fits, vapours and hystericks, shall ever move me to take the least compassion on you—
coute qui coute—

Enter Heartly and Sir Charles.

Sir Char. I am overjoy'd to hear it—there they are, the pretty doves! that is the age, neighbour Heartly, for happiness and pleasure.

Heart. I am willing you see, to lose no time; which may convince you, Sir Charles, how proud I am of this alliance in our families.

Sir Char. The thoughts of it rejoices me—gad, I will fend for the fiddles, and take a dance myself, and a fig for the gout and rheumatism.—But hold, hold—the lovers, methinks, are a little out of humour with each other—What is the matter, Jack? not pouting, sure, before your time.

Y. Clackit. A trifle, Sir—the lady will tell you—

[*Hums a tune.*]

Heart. You seem to be troubled, Harriet.—What can this mean?

Miss Har. You have been in an error, Sir, about me—I did not undeceive you, because I could not imagine, that the consequences could have been so serious and so sudden—but I am now forced to tell you, that you have misunderstood me—that you have distressed me—

Heart. How, my dear?

Sir Char. What do you say, Miss?

Y. Clackit. Mademoiselle is pleased to be out of humour, but I can't blame her; for, upon my honour, I think a little coquetry becomes her.

Sir Char. Ay, ay, ay—oh, ho!—is that all? these little squalls seldom upset the lover's boat, but drive it the faster to port—ay, ay, ay—

Heart. Don't be uneasy, my dear, that you have declared your passion—be consistent now, lest you should be thought capricious.

Y. Clackit. Talk to her a little, Mr. Heartly, she is a fine lady, and has many virtues, but she does not know the world.

Sir Char. Come, come, you must be friends again, my children.

Miss Har. I beg you will let me alone, Sir.

Heart. For heaven's sake, Miss Harriet, explain this riddle to me.

Miss Har. I cannot Sir. I have discovered the weakness of my heart—I have discovered it to you, Sir; but your unkind interpretations, and reproachful looks, convince me, that I have already said but too much.

[*Exit. Heartly*]

Sir Char. Well, but harkye, nephew—this is going a little too far—what have you done to her?

Heart. I never saw her so much moved before!

Y. Clackit. Upon my soul, gentlemen, I am as much surprised at it as you can be—the little *bro-millierie* between us, arose upon her persisting, that there was no passion, no *penchant* between us.

Sir Char. I'll tell you what, Jack—there is a certain kind of impudence about you, that I don't approve of; and were I a young girl, those coxcomical airs of yours would surfeit me.

Y. Clackit. But as the young ladies are not quite so squeamish as you, uncle, I fancy they will chuse me as I am. Ha! ha!—But what can the lady object to? I have offered to marry her, is not that a proof sufficient that I like her? a young fellow must have some affection that will go such lengths to indulge it. Ha! ha!

Sir Char. Why really, friend Heartly, I don't see how a young man can well do more, or a lady desire more—what say you, neighbour?

Heart. Upon my word, I am puzzled about it—my thoughts upon the matter are so various, and so confused.—Every thing I see and hear is so contradictory—is so—the certainly cannot like any body else?

Y. Clackit. No, no, I'll answer for that—

Heart. Or she may be fearful then, that your passion for her is not sincere, or like other young men of the times, you may grow careless upon marriage, and neglect her.

Y. Clackit. Ha! egad, you have hit it; nothing but a little natural delicate sensibility—

[Hums a tune.]

Heart. If so, perhaps the violence of her reproaches may proceed from the lukewarmness of your professions.

Y. Clackit. *Je vous demande pardon*—I have sworn to her a hundred and a hundred times, that she should be the happiest of her sex—but there is nothing surprizing in all this; it is the misery of an over-fond heart, to be always doubtful of it's happiness.

Heart. And if she marries thee, I fear that she'll be kept in a state of doubt as long as she lives.

[Half aside.]

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Pray, gentlemen, what is the matter among you? and which of you has affronted my mistiefs? she is in a prodigious taking yonder, and she vows to return into the country agnin—I can get nothing but sighs from her.

Y. Clackit. Poor thing!

Lucy. Poor thing! the devil take this love, I say—there's more rout about it than 'tis worth.

Y. Clackit. I beg your pardon for that, Mrs. Abigail.

Heart. I must enquire further in this; her behaviour is too particular for me not to be disturbed at it.

Lucy. She desires, with the leave of these gentlemen, that when she has recovered herself, she may talk with you alone, Sir. [To Heartly.]

Heart. I shall with pleasure attend her.

[Exit Lucy.]

Y. Clackit. Divin Bacchus. La, la, la! [Sings.]

Sir Char. I wou'd give, old as I am, a leg or an arm to be below'd by that sweet creature as you are, Jack!

Y. Clackit. And throw your gout and rheumatism into the bargain, uncle?—ha, ha! Divin Bacchus. La, la, la, &c. [Sings.]

Sir Char. What the plague are you quavering

at? thou hast no more feeling for thy happiness than my stick here.

Y. Clackit. I beg your pardon for that, my dear uncle. [Takes out a pocket looking-glass.]

Sir Char. I wonder what the devil is come to the young fellows of this age, neighbour Heartly? why a fine woman has no effect upon 'em.—Is there no method to make 'em less fond of themselves, and more mindful of the ladies?

Heart. I know but of one, Sir Charles.—

Sir Char. Ay, what's that?

Heart. Why to break all the looking-glasses in the kingdom. [Pointing to Y. Clackit.]

Sir Char. Ay, ay, they are such fops, so taken up with themselves!—zounds, when I was young, and in love—

Y. Clackit. You were a prodigious fine sight, to be sure.

Heart. Look'ye, Mr. Clackit, if Miss Harriet's affections declare for you, she must not be treated with neglect or disdain: nor could I bear it, Sir. Any man must be proud of her partiality to him, and he must be fashionably insensible indeed, who wou'd not make it his darling care to defend from every inquietude the most delicate and tender of her sex.

Sir Char. Most nobly and warmly said, Mr. Heartly. Go to her, nephew, directly—throw yourself at her feet, and swear how much her beauty and virtue have captivated you, and don't let her go till you have set her dear little heart at rest.

Y. Clackit. I must desire to be excus'd—wou'd you have me say the same thing over and over again? I can't do it positively—it is my turn to be piqu'd now.

Sir Char. Damn your conceit, Jack; I can bear it no longer.

Heart. I am very sorry to find that any young lady, so near and dear to me, shou'd bestow her heart, where there is so little prospect of it's being valued as it ought. However, I shall not oppose my authority to her inclinations; and so—who waits there? [Enter Servant.] Let the young lady know that I shall attend her commands in the library. [Exit Servant.] Will you excuse me, gentlemen?

Sir Char. Ay, ay—we'll leave you to yourselves; and pray convince her, that I and my nephew are most sincerely her very humble servants.

Y. Clackit. O, yes, you may depend upon me.

Heart. A very slender dependence truly. [Aside.] [Exit.]

Y. Clackit. We'll be with you again to know what your *tete a tete* produces, and in the mean time I am hers—and yours—adieu. Come, uncle—fal, la, la, la!

Sir Char. I could knock him down with pleasure. [Aside.]

[Exeunt Sir Charles and Y. Clackit.]



ACT II.

SCENE, A Library.

Heartly (speaking to a Servant.)

TELL Miss Harriet, that I am here. If she is indisposed, I will wait upon her in her own room. [Exit Servant.]

However mysterious her conduct appears to me, yet still it is to be decyphered—this young gentleman has certainly touch'd her—there are some objections to him, and among so many young men of

fashion that fall in her way, she certainly might have made a better choice: she has an understanding to be sensible of this; and, if I am not mistaken, it is a struggle between her reason and her passion, that occasions all this confusion. But here she is.

Enter Miss Harriet.

Miss Har. I hope you are not angry, Sir, that I left you so abruptly, without making any apology?

Heart. I am angry that you think any apology necessary. The matter we were upon was of such a delicate nature, that I was more pleased with your confusion, than I should have been with your excuses. You'll pardon me, my dear.

Miss Har. I have reflected, that the person for whom I have conceived a most tender regard may, from the wisest motives, doubt of my passion; and therefore I would endeavour to answer all his objections, and convince him how deserving he is of my highest esteem.

Heart. I have not yet apprehended what kind of dispute could arise between you and Mr. Clackit: I would advise you both to come to a reconciliation as soon as possible. The law of nature is an imperious one, and cannot, like those of our country, be easily evaded; and though reason may suggest some disagreeable reflections, yet when the stroke is to be given, we must submit to it.

Miss Har. He still continues in his error, and I cannot undeceive him.

Heart. Shall I take the liberty of telling you, my dear. [*Taking her hand.*] You tremble, Harriet!—what is the matter with you?

Miss Har. Nothing, Sir. Pray go on.

Heart. I guess whence proceeds all your uneasiness. You fear that the world will not be so readily convinced of this young gentleman's merit as you are: and, indeed, I could wish him more deserving of you; but your regard for him gives him a merit he otherwise would have wanted, and almost makes me blind to his failings.

Miss Har. And would you advise me, Sir, to make choice of this gentleman?

Heart. I would advise you, as I always have done, to consult your own heart upon such an occasion.

Miss Har. If that is your advice, I will most religiously follow it; and, for the last time, I am resolved to discover my real sentiments; but as a confession of this kind will not become me, I have been thinking of some innocent stratagem to spare my blushes, and in part to relieve me from the shame of a declaration. Might I be permitted to write to him?

Heart. I think you may, my dear, without the least offence to your delicacy: and indeed you ought to explain yourself; your late misunderstanding makes it absolutely necessary.

Miss Har. Will you be kind enough to assist me? will you write it for me, Sir?

Heart. Oh, no! willingly! and as I am made a party, it will remove all objections.

Miss Har. I will dictate to you in the best manner I am able.

Heart. And here is pen, ink, and paper, to obey your commands.

Miss Har. Lord, how my heart beats! I fear I cannot go through it.

Heart. Now, my dear, I am ready. Don't be disturb'd. He is certainly a man of family, and tho' he has some little faults, time and your virtues will correct them. Come, what shall I write?

[*Preparing to write.*]

Miss Har. Pray give me a moment's thought; 'tis a terrible task, Mr. Heartly.

Heart. I know it is. Don't hurry yourself: I shall wait with patience. Come, Miss Harriet.

Miss Har. [*Dictating.*] "It is in vain for me to conceal, from one of your understanding, the secrets of my heart."

Heart. The secrets of my heart—

Miss Har. "Tho' your humility and modesty will not suffer you to perceive it"—

Heart. Do you think, my dear, that he is much troubled with those qualities?

Miss Har. Pray indulge me, Sir.

Heart. I beg your pardon.—Your humility and modesty will not suffer you to perceive it—

Miss Har. "Every thing tells you, that it is you that I love."

Heart. Very well,

Miss Har. Yes:—you that I love;—do you understand me?

Heart. O! yes, yes;—I understand you,—that it is you that I love.—This is very plain, my dear.

Miss Har. I would have it so.—"And tho' I am already bound in gratitude to you"—

Heart. In gratitude to Mr. Clackit!

Miss Har. Pray write, Sir.

Heart. Well.—In gratitude to you; [Writes]—I must write what she would have me.

Miss Har. "Yet my passion is a most disinterested one"—

Heart. Most disinterested one.

Miss Har. "And to convince you, that you owe much more to my affections"—

Heart. And then?

Miss Har. "I could wish that I had not experienced"—

Heart. Stay,—stay:—had not experienced.—

Miss Har. "Your tender care of me in my infancy."

Heart. [*Disturbed.*] What did you say?—Did I hear right, or am I in a dream!

Miss Har. Why, have I declared myself?—He'll hate me for my folly.

Heart. Harriet!

Miss Har. Sir!

Heart. To whom do you write this letter?

Miss Har. To—to—Mr. Clackit,—is it not?

Heart. You must not mention, then, the care of your infancy; it would be ridiculous.

Miss Har. It would, indeed;—I own it;—it is improper.

Heart. What, did it escape you in your confusion?

Miss Har. It did indeed.

Heart. What must I put in its place?

Miss Har. Indeed I don't know.—I have said more than enough to make myself understood.

Heart. Then I'll only finish your letter with the usual compliment, and send it away.

Miss Har. Yes—send it away—if you think I ought to send it.

Heart. [*Troubled.*] Ought to send it! Who's there?—[*Enter a Servant.*] Carry this letter.

[*An action escapes from Harriet, as if to hinder the sending the letter.*]

—Is it not for Mr. Clackit?

Miss Harriet. [*Peevishly.*] Who can it be for?

Heart. [*To the Servant.*] Here, take this letter to Mr. Clackit.

[*Gives the letter.*—*Exit Servant.*]

Miss Har. What a terrible situation!

Heart. I am thunderstruck!

Miss Har. I cannot speak another word.

Heart. My prudence fails me!

Miss Har. He disapproves my passion, and I shall die with confusion.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. The conversation is over, and I may appear. [*Aside.*]—Sir Charles is without, Sir, and is impatient to know your determination;—may he be permitted to see you?

Heart. [*Aside.*] I must retire, to conceal my weakness. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. Upon my word this is very whimsical.—What is the reason, Miss, that your guardian is gone away without giving me an answer?

Miss Har. [*Aside.*] What a contempt he must have for me, to behave in this manner! [*Exit.*]

Lucy. Extremely well this, and equally foolish on both sides!—But what can be the meaning of it?—Ho, ho!—I think I have a glimmering at last.—Suppose she should not like young Shatter-brains after all; and indeed she has never absolutely said she did; who knows but she has at last opened her mind to my good master, and he finding her taste (like that of other girls at her age) most particularly ridiculous, has not been so complaisant as he used to be.—What a shame it is that I don't know more of this matter, a wench of spirit, as I am, a favourite of my mistress, and as inquisitive as I ought to be! It is an affront to my character, and I must have satisfaction immediately.—[*Going.*] I will go directly to my young mistress, tease her to death, till I am at the bottom of this; and if threatening, soothing, scolding, whispering, crying, and lying, will not prevail, I will even give her warning—and go upon the stage. [*Exit.*]

Enter Heartly.

Heart. The more I reflect upon what has passed, the more I am convinced that she did not intend writing to this young fellow.—What am I to think of it then?—Let a man be ever so much upon his guard against the approaches of vanity, yet he will find himself weak in that quarter.—Had not my reason made a little stand against my presumption, I might have interpreted some of Harriet's words in my own favour; but—I may well blush, though alone, at my extravagant folly!—Can it be possible that so young a creature should even cast a thought of that kind upon me?—Upon me! presumptuous vanity!—No, no, I will do her and myself the justice to acknowledge that, for a very few slight appearances, there are a thousand reasons that destroy so ridiculous a supposition.

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Char. Well, Mr. Heartly, what are we to hope for?

Heart. Upon my word, Sir, I am still in the dark; we puzzle about, indeed, but we don't get forward.

Sir Char. What the devil is the meaning of all this? There never sure were lovers so difficult to bring together. But have you not been a little too rough with the lady? for as I passed by her but now, she seem'd a little out of humour—and, upon my faith, not the less beautiful for a little pouting.

Heart. Upon my word, Sir Charles, what I can collect from her behaviour is, that your nephew is not so much in her good graces, as he made you believe.

Sir Charles. 'Egad, like enough;—but hold, hold—this must be looked a little into;—if it is so, I wou'd be glad to know, why, and wherefore, I have been made so ridiculous.—Eh, master Heartly, does he take me for his fool, his beast,

his Merry Andrew? By the Lord Harry—

Heart. In him a little vanity is excusable.

Sir Char. I am his vanity's humble servant for that though.

Heart. He is of an age, Sir Charles—

Sir Char. Ay, of an age to be very impertinent; but I shall desire him to be less free with his uncle for the future, I assure him.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. I have it, I have it, gentlemen! You need not puzzle any more about the matter.—I have got the secret.—I know the knight-errant that has wounded our distress'd lady.

Sir Char. Well, and who? and what child?

Lucy. What, has not she told you, Sir?

[*To Heartly.*]

Heart. Not directly.

Lucy. So much the better.—What pleasure it is to discover a secret, and then tell it to all the world!—I preis'd her so much, that she at last confess'd.

Sir Char. Well, what?

Lucy. That, in the first place, she did not like your nephew.

Sir Char. And I told the puppy so.

Lucy. That she had a most mortal antipathy for the young men of this age; and that she had settled her affections upon one of riper years, and riper understanding.

Sir Char. Indeed!

Lucy. And that she expected from a lover in his autumn more affection, more complaisance, more constancy, and more discretion of course.

Heart. This is very particular.

Sir Char. Ay, but it is very prudent for all that.

Lucy. In short, as she had openly declared against the nephew, I took upon me to speak of his uncle.

Sir Char. Of me, child?

Lucy. Yes, of you, Sir; and she did not say me nay—but cast such a look, and fetch'd such a sigh,—that if ever I look'd and sigh'd in my life, I know how it is with her.

Sir Char. What the devil!—Why surely—Eh, Lucy!—You joke for certain—Mr. Heartly!—Eh!

Lucy. Indeed I do not Sir,—'twas in vain for me to say that nothing cou'd be so ridiculous as such a choice.—Nay, Sir, I went a little further, (you'll excuse me) and told her—Good God, Madam, said I, why he is old and gouty, asthmatic, rheumatic, sciatic, spleen-atic.—It signified nothing, she had determined—

Sir Char. But you need not have told her all that.

Heart. I am persuaded, Sir Charles, that a good heart, and a good mind, will prevail more with that young lady, than the more fashionable accomplishments.

Sir Char. I'll tell you what, neighbour, I have had my days, and have been well receiv'd among the ladies, I have—But in truth, I am rather in my winter, than my autumn; she must mean somebody else. Now I think again.—It can't be me—No, no, it can't be me.

Lucy. But I tell you it is, Sir.—You are the man—her stars have decreed it: and what they decree, tho' ever so ridiculous, must come to pass.

Sir Char. Say you so?—Why then, Monsieur Nephew, I shall have a little laugh with you—Ha, ha, ha! the tit-bit is not for you, my nice Sir—your betters must be serv'd before you.—But here he comes—Not a word for your life.—We'll laugh at him most triumphantly,—Ha, ha! but mum, mum.

[*Music plays without.*]

Enter Young Clackit.

Y. Clackit. That will do most divinely well.—
Bravo, bravo! Messieurs Vocal and Instrumental!
—Stay in that chamber, and I will let you know
the time for your appearance. [*To the musicians.*]
Meeting by accident with some artists of the string,
and my particular friends, I have brought 'em to
celebrate Miss Harriet's and my approaching hap-
piness. [*To Heartly.*]

Sir Char. Do you hear the puppy? [*To Lucy.*]

Heart. It is time to clear up all mistakes.

Sir Char. Now for it.

Heart. Miss Harriet, Sir, was not destin'd for you.

Y. Clackit. What do you say, Sir?

Heart. That the young lady has fix'd her affec-
tions upon another.

Y. Clackit. Upon another?

Sir Char. Yes, Sir, another—that is English,
Sir, and you may translate it into French, if you
like it better.

Y. Clack. *Vous êtes bien drole mon oncle.*—Ha, ha!

Sir Char. Ay, ay, shew your teeth, you have
nothing else for it;—but she has fix'd her heart
upon another, I tell you.

Y. Clack. Very well, Sir, extremely well.

Sir Char. And that other, Sir, is one to whom
you owe great respect.

Y. Clack. I am his most respectful humble servant.

Sir Char. You are a fine youth, my sweet ne-
phew, to tell me a story of a cock and a bull, of
you and the young lady, when you have no more
interest in her than the Czar of Muscovy.

Y. Clack. [*Smiling.*] But, my dear uncle, don't
carry this jest too far—I shall begin to be uneasy.

Sir Char. Ay, ay, I know your vanity: you
think now that the women are all for you, young
fellows.——

Y. Clack. Nine hundred and ninety-nine in a
thousand, I believe, uncle. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Char. You'll make a damn'd foolish figure,
by and by, Jack.

Y. Clackit. Whoever my precious rival is, he must
prepare himself for a little humility; for be he ever
so mighty, my dear uncle, I have that in my pocket
will lower his top-sails for him.

[*Searching his pocket.*]

Sir Char. Well, what's that?

Y. Clackit. A fourteen pounder only, my good
uncle—a letter from the lady.

[*Takes it out of his pocket.*]

Sir Char. What, to you?

Y. Clackit. To me, Sir—this moment receiv'd,
and overflowing with the tenderest sentiments.

Sir Char. To you!

Y. Clackit. Most undoubtedly.—She reproaches
me with my excessive modesty.—There can be no
mistake.

Sir Char. What letter is this he chatters about?

[*To Heartly.*]

Heart. One written by me, and dictated by the
young lady.

Sir Char. What! sent by her to him?

Heart. I believe so.

Sir Char. Well, but then!—how the devil—
Mrs. Lucy!—Eh!—What becomes of your fine story?

Lucy. I don't understand it.

Sir Char. Nor I!

Heart. [*Hesitating.*] Not—I——

Y. Clackit. But I do—and so you will all pre-
sently.—Well, my dear uncle, what are you asto-
nished, petrify'd, annihilated?

Sir Char. With your impudence, Jack!—But
I'll see it out.

Enter Miss Harriet.

Miss Har. Bless me, Mr. Heartly, what is all
this music for in the next room?

Y. Clackit. I brought the gentlemen of the
string, Mademoiselle, to convince you, that I feel,
as I ought, the honour you have done me—[*Shew-
ing the letter.*] But for heaven's sake be sincere a
little with these good folks; they tell me here that
I am nobody, and there is another happier than
myself, and for the soul of me, I don't know how
to believe them.—Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Char. Let us hear Miss speak.

Miss Har. It is a most terrible task; but I am
compell'd to it; and to hesitate any longer would
be injurious to my guardian, his friend, this young
gentleman, and my own character.

Y. Clackit. Most judicious, upon my soul.

Sir Char. Hold your tongue, Jack.

Y. Clackit. I am dumb.

Miss Har. You have all been in an error.—My
bashfulness may have deceiv'd you,—my heart ne-
ver did.

Y. Clack. *C'est vrai.*

Miss Har. Therefore, before I declare my sen-
timents, it is proper that I disavow any engage-
ment:—but at the same time must confess—

Y. Clackit. Ho——ho——

Miss Har. With fear and shame confess——

Y. Clack. *Courage, Mademoiselle!*

Miss Har. That another, not you, Sir, has
gain'd a power over my heart.—[*To Y. Clackit.*]

Sir Char. Another, not you; mind that Jack.
Ha! ha!

Miss Har. It is a power indeed, which he de-
spises.—I cannot be deceived in his conduct.—
Modesty may tie the tongue of our sex, but silence
in him could proceed only from contempt.

Sir Char. How prettily she reproaches me!—
But I'll soon make it up with her.

Miss Har. As to that letter, Sir; your error
there is excusable; and I own myself in that parti-
cular a little blameable.—But it was not my fault
that it was sent to you; and the contents must
have told you, that it could not possibly be meant
for you. [*To Y. Clackit.*]

Sir Char. Proof positive, Jack:—say no more.

—Now is my time to begin.—Hem!—hem!—
Sweet young lady!—hem!—whose charms are so
mighty, so far transcending every thing that we

read of in history or fable, how could you possibly
think that my silence proceeded from contempt?
Was it natural or prudent, think you, for a man
of sixty-five, nay, just entering into his sixty-sixth
year——

Y. Clack. *O misericorde!* What is my uncle my
rival! Nay then, I shall burst, by Jupiter!——
Ha! ha! ha!

Miss Har. Don't imagine, Sir, that to me your
age is any fault.

Sir Charles. [*Bowing.*] You are very obliging,
Madam.

Miss Har. Neither is it, Sir, a merit of that
extraordinary nature, that I should sacrifice to it
an inclination which I have conceived for another.

Sir Char. How is this?

Y. Clackit. Another! not you,—mind that,
uncle.

Lucy. What is the meaning of all this!

Y. Clackit. Proof positive, uncle—and very posi-
tive.

Sir Char. I have been led into a mistake, Ma-
dam, which I hope you will excuse: and I have
made myself very ridiculous, which I hope I shall

forget:—And so, Madam, I am your humble servant.—This young lady has something very extraordinary about her!

Heart. What I now see, and the remembrance of what is past, force me to break silence.

Y. Clackit. Ay, now for it. Hear him—hear him.

Heart. O my Harriet!—I too must be disgrac'd in my turn.—Can you think that I have seen and convers'd with you unmov'd?—Indeed I have not.

—The more I was sensible of your merit, the stronger were my motives to stifle the ambition of my heart.—But now I can no longer resist the violence of my passion, which casts me at your feet, the most unworthy indeed of all your admirers, but of all the most affectionate.

Y. Clackit. So, so, the moon has changed, and the grown gentlemen begin to be frisky.

Lucy. What, my master in love too!—I'll never trust these tie-wigs again.

[*Aside.*

Miss Har. I have refused my hand to Sir Charles and this young gentleman:—the one accuses me of caprice, the other of singularity.—Should I refuse my hand a third time, [*Smiling.*] I might draw upon myself a more severe reproach—and therefore I accept your favour, Sir, and will endeavour to deserve it.

Heart. And thus I seal my acknowledgments, and from henceforth devote my every thought, and all my services, to the author of my happiness.

[*Kisses her hand.*

Lucy. Since matters are so well settled, give me

leave, Sir, to congratulate you on your success—and my young lady on her judgment.—You have my taste exactly, Miss; ripe fruit for my money; when it is too green it sets one's teeth on edge, and when too mellow, it has no flavour at all.

Sir Char. Hold your tongue, you baggage! [*To Lucy.*] Well, my dear discreet nephew, are you satisfied with the fool's part you have given me, and play'd yourself, in the farce?

Y. Clackit. What would you have me say, Sir? I am too much a philosopher to fret myself, because the wind, which was east this morning, is now west.—The poor girl in pique has kill'd herself, to be revenged on me; but harkye, Sir, I believe Heartly will be cursed mad to have me live in his neighbourhood.—A word to the wife.—

Sir Char. Thou hast a most incorrigible vanity, Jack, and nothing can cure thee.—Mr. Heartly, I have sense enough, and friendship enough, not to be uneasy at your happiness.

Heart. I hope, Sir Charles, that we shall still continue to live as neighbours and friends. For you, my Harriet, words cannot express my wonder or my joy; my future conduct must tell you what a sense I have of my happiness, and how much I shall endeavour to deserve it.

For ev'ry charm that ever yet blest'd youth,
Accept compliance, tenderness, and truth;
My friendly care shall change to grateful love,
And the fond husband still the GUARDIAN prove.



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